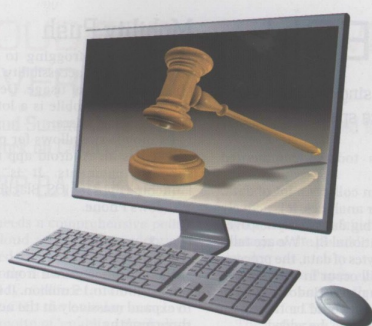


News monitored for: Mydala



CASE STUDY



MYDALA OPTS FOR OPEN SOURCE

Mydala integrated its financial solution, user analytics and CRM on a home-grown platform for the customization of ever changing deal models and greater merchant satisfaction.

BY HEENA JHINGAN

When the deal aggregator Mydala was planning its portal, CTO Ashish Bhatnagar was convinced that the business was likely to take off in a big way and that they would be reaching a scale where, in a day, they would be catering to nearly 8 mn subscribers and running over 1.5 lakh deals across 93 cities.

As a start-up, the company could not

afford the risk of investing in an off-the-shelf platform, which could become redundant before the business took off. Bhatnagar decided to leverage open source technology and develop a system that would be modular and scalable.

"Mydala now works with close to 16 servers hosted by Netmagic Solutions. We use the LAMP stack. For the CDN, we work with Akamai. Various pay-

ment gateways for credit and debit cards, mobile, cash cards, etc have all been integrated into the main system," he explained.

The intention of building a home-grown financial solution was that open source software can be customized easily and that it works well for startups.

Mydala is not a traditional B2C e-commerce site. The deals model is quite different. There could be merchants who get paid for something while others subscribe to the service and pay for showcasing themselves.

Customization and integration with a COTS would take nearly four to six months. It took Mydala just two months to get its system up and running on top of LAMP. "We used Sphinx for search with some bits of Magento on top of it. For the CRM, we clubbed several open source solutions like LimeSurvey and various open source chat engines.

"Our integrated system is online can be accessed both by the merchant and at our end giving a holistic view and understanding of the ROI for the merchant. Our platform is not just financial software, it is also integrated with user analytics and CRM," he added.

The platform tells the merchant exactly what has happened. A panel or dashboard gives the necessary information plus the flexibility to choose and modify the campaign based on the results of the reports.

"The beauty of open source software is that you can pick and choose the best solutions that are available, integrate them, customize and own them. The difficult commodity to find, in India, is engineers who have the skills to work on these technologies. The key problem with off-the-shelf solutions is that they are just black boxes to the users. Therefore, we decided to build our own and customize it with the desired functionality. We had to invest in immense engineering effort and find the open source engineers," he said.

Mydala prioritized certain features and pushed the rest back for a later development cycle.

"We thought that our platform was complete. Recently, however, we realized that it was not enough and that it still needed to evolve. We are using Piwik and Google for analytics."

User personalization is getting bigger and needs to be more effective for merchant and customer satisfaction. This is the next frontier for the site.

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OUR PLATFORM IS NOT JUST FINANCIAL SOFTWARE, IT IS ALSO INTEGRATED WITH USER ANALYTICS AND CRM. WE BUILT IT USING THE OPEN SOURCE LAMP STACK
ASHISH BHATNAGAR,
CTO, MYDALA